

REMARKS

Summary of Office Action

The Examiner asserted that the application includes claims that are directed to five allegedly patentably distinct species of a storage case embodiment, viz.,

1. A storage case species shown in FIGS. 1-22;
2. A storage case species shown in FIG. 23;
3. A storage case species shown in FIGS. 24-36 and 40-43;
4. A storage case species shown in FIG. 52; and
5. A storage case species shown in FIGS. 58-60.

The Examiner asserted that the application includes claims that are directed to five allegedly distinct species of a lock, viz.,

1. A lock species shown in FIGS. 12-16e;
2. A lock species shown in FIGS. 37-39;
3. A lock species shown in FIGS. 44-47;
4. A lock species shown in FIG. 48;
5. A lock species shown in FIGS. 49-50;
6. A lock species shown in FIGS. 53-55;
7. A lock species shown in FIG. 56; and
8. A lock species shown in FIG. 57.

The Examiner stated that it is not clear which claims are generic.

Applicants' Reply

Applicants hereby elect storage case species 1 (FIGS. 1-22) and lock species 1 (FIGS. 12-16e) for prosecution at this time.

Applicants understand that upon allowance of a generic claim, applicant will be entitled to consideration of claims to additional species which are written in dependent

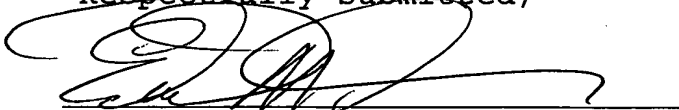
form or otherwise include all the limitations of the generic claim.

Applicants have canceled claims 109-119 and have added new claims 120-150, which are directed to other subject matter that applicants regard as theirs. The added claims include no new matter. After entry of the foregoing amendment, claims 82-108 and 120-150 will be pending in the application and applicants respectfully submit that at least claims 82 and 120 are generic.

Applicants respectfully submit that the following claims read on the elected species: 82-96, 98, 101-108, 120-138, 140 and 143-150. Applicants respectfully note that new claims 139 and 141-142 do not read on the elected species, but applicants look forward to the consideration of those claims upon the allowance of a generic claim. (Applicants understand that, after entry of those claims, the Examiner may withdraw them because they do not read on the elected species. In any subsequent papers filed by applicants, those claims would be identified as "withdrawn", until such time as those claims may be considered by the Examiner.)

An early and favorable action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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